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3, 2, 1, Fire...Sale



Retailer gets the OK to liquidate its stock. Page 12.



YATES CALLS ON O-TOWN

Francesco Yates, who is turning heads and radio dials with his break-out hit *Call*, paid Ottawa a visit Wednesday. Turn to page 8 to read what music heavyweights like Justin Timberlake and Pharrell Williams are saying about the 19-year-old Canadian singer. MIKE CARROCCETTO/FOR METRO

Get set to pay more, Ottawa

City hall. Draft budget proposes hikes to taxes, bus fare, water and sewer

Other budget highlights

- Garbage fees freeze for the third year (\$82 for the average homeowner).
- The four-year recreation fee freeze is over. Recreation facilities will see a two per cent tax rate cap this year.
- 20 fewer city hall bureaucrats. Positions will likely be reduced through attrition, not layoffs.

Higher transit fares, a tax hike and funds to fight Ottawa's gangs are part of the city budget plan this year.

Councillors tabled a draft of the 2015 budget on Wednesday. As promised, homeowners can expect a two per cent increase on their tax bills this year — or an additional \$67 per year for the owner of an average \$355,000 urban home (\$55 for those in rural areas of the city). For commercial building owners, the tax increase is smaller, going up by 1.37 per cent over last year.

However, water and sewer taxes will rise six per cent. That means the average homeowner will shell out \$48 more this year than last.

"This is a reasonable budget that respects taxpayers' ability to pay, while maintaining high-quality public services," Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson said in his opening speech.

The city will also make its first annual \$400,000 in-

vestment in an exit strategy for gangs. Of that amount, \$100,000 will go toward employment strategies for those leaving the street life or the siblings of gang members.

OC Transpo fares will increase by 2.5 per cent (an extra \$2.50 for regular adult monthly passes).

The biggest slices of the \$3-billion budget are transit, community and social services, water and sewer and police funds.

The final budget will be brought to council for approval on March 11. **LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO**



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Politics

MPP Lisa MacLeod mulls dropping leadership bid to replace John Baird

Nepean-Carleton MPP Lisa MacLeod is not ruling out running federally, now that MP John Baird is bowing out.

That would mean MacLeod would drop her leadership bid for the Ontario Progressive Conservatives.

She has until Friday to decide — that's the deadline day for a \$50,000 deposit for the provincial race. Between Baird's resignation and Nipissing MPP Vic Fedeli dropping out of the leadership race, things have changed within a 48-hour period for MacLeod.

"I'm not trying to be coy," said MacLeod. "But this is a \$1.5-million decision on my part ... that's what the limit is to spend on the race."

LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO

Security

Investment scam warning

The Manitoba Securities Commission (MSC) warned the public Wednesday to be aware of a possible investment scam.

The MSC said a group calling themselves the Ecovexo Investment Group, has been advertising a "no-risk" investment opportunity in Winnipeg and Ottawa newspapers.

Investors who believe they have been approached by an investment fraud or been defrauded should call 1-855-FRAUD-MB to file a complaint or speak with an investigator. **METRO**

Aboriginal centre forced to close

The head of a drop-in centre for Ottawa's Aboriginal population said he was "shocked and angry" to learn the city has decided to cut future funding, forcing his 10-year-old refuge on Rideau Street to close.

Neal Freeland, president of the Odawa Native Friendship Centre, said the funding cuts for the Shawenjeagamik Aboriginal Drop-In Centre at 510 Rideau St. will force it to close down for good on March 31.

The centre serves approximately 500 clients and makes upwards of 60,000 meals per year. It receives funding from the federal and provincial governments, which is administered by the City of Ottawa.

Freeland said it received just over \$400,000 per year.

He said the drop-in centre provides specialized services, including staff who speak a variety of First Nations languages, elders who visit to

give talks, and daily smudging ceremonies.

"They're going to lose culturally appropriate support for crisis intervention counselling, transition counselling, as well as addictions and substance abuse counsellors who are there at the centre," said Freeland.

The centre will host a meeting at St. Paul's Eastern United Church at 11 a.m. Thursday to talk to the homeless about what options they have.

"The federal government decided that they wanted to adopt a housing-first policy," Mayor Jim Watson told reporters Wednesday, "which meant that we had to go and change the criteria for the funding, so the request for proposals was issued, a peer review looked at all of the organizations and they came up with a series of recommendations."

JOE LOFARO/METRO
WITH FILES FROM LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO

Ottawa lawyer slams gag order in terror case

Court. Awso Peshdary ordered not to contact other men accused of terror charges



JOE LOFARO
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An Ottawa defence lawyer says his client, who is accused of facilitating a terrorist group, should not be banned from communicating with a list of potential witnesses without hearing any evidence from the Crown to support the court order.

Richard Morris is representing Awso Peshdary, 25, who was arrested in Ottawa Tuesday morning by the RCMP Integrated National Security Enforcement Team (INSET), which also laid charges in absentia against two other Ottawa-area men, John Maguire, 24, and Khadar Khalib, 23.

Police charged Peshdary

with participating in the activity of a terrorist group and facilitating the activity of a terrorist group.

Morris said he was "in the dark" about the evidence against his client and argued in court there should have been some disclosure from the Crown attorney to support a court order banning Peshdary from communicating with a list of people.

Among the 16 people on the list are Maguire and Khalib, as well as brothers Carlos and Ashton Larmond and Suliman Mohamed.

The Larmond brothers and Mohamed were arrested last month in separate RCMP national security investigations and remain in custody.

Peshdary made his first court appearance wearing a black parka with a fur-lined hood. He has a thick beard and his face remained expressionless as he sat in the prisoner's box.

He is scheduled to return to court in person on Feb. 9 to set a bail hearing date.



Defence lawyer Richard Morris says the Crown should have presented evidence to support its call for a ban on his client Awso Peshdary communicating with a list of potential witnesses. JOE LOFARO/METRO

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Ottawa's new transit commissioner Stephen Blais speaks with reporters. LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO

Free Wi-Fi in the works for buses

OC Transpo. Fares are going up, but you might be getting more for what you pay for



LUCY SCHOLEY
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Ottawa's transit riders may soon be able to check email and Facebook on the bus without racking up data charges.

Thirty-seven new OC Transpo double-decker buses will be outfitted with free Wi-Fi — 15 of which should be rolling out on the streets later this year.

"The buses are ready to go," said John Manconi, the

city's general manager of transit services, on Wednesday. "It's a question of getting that service for the free relationship that you get with Wi-Fi providers."

These buses will be "state-of-the-art," he said, with security cameras and automated passenger counters.

The Gatineau STO bus service also offers Wi-Fi access on its Rapibus service.

There is no plan to retrofit older OC Transpo buses for free Internet, but the city is looking at the costs.

"Given a choice of spending on retrofitting buses for Wi-Fi or spending on increasing service and reliability for residents, I think we'll always make the choice to invest in improving service and the reliability of the system," said Stephen Blais, chair of the transit commission.

And the city is bringing in more services this year too.

High-growth areas — including Orléans, Kanata and parts of Barrhaven and Bank Street — will see more mid-day, evening and weekend bus services starting mid-year.

Customers will also be paying 2.5 per cent more in transit fares this year, starting in July. Blais said it's a "reasonable" hike compared to previous years.

"I think it's more reasonable to have small increases each and every year than to artificially keep prices down for one and then next year have one that's eight per cent or nine per cent," he said.

Transit budget breakdown

\$187.2M

Fare increases are expected to generate \$187.2 million in revenue for the city, plus \$2 million from Para Transpo riders.

500K

Ridership is expected to increase by 500,000 (up to 97.3 million more trips).

5,700

5,700 more Para Transpo trips are expected.

\$4.2M

In both 2014 and 2015, \$4.2 million is earmarked for increased bus service, Para Transpo trips and the Trillium Line.

\$13.7M

Confederation Line "readiness" (i.e. customer information and control room) will cost \$13.7 million this year.

No new hires for Ottawa police until 2016



Police Chief Charles Bordeleau
LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO

The Ottawa Police Service's plan to hire 75 new members over three years is "overdue," according to the police association president.

Recruiting won't start for another year.

Starting in 2016, the police services will be looking to hire 25 new members every year for three years, according to a draft of the Ottawa Police Service board budget tabled on Wednesday.

Ottawa police Chief Charles Bordeleau said they made a "very conscious decision" to maintain staffing levels in 2015. The OPS is also looking to save on \$2 million in the budget, which is difficult, said Bordeleau.

"It's a challenge, there's no question," he said. "It's getting harder and harder to do. But, you know, the men and women of the police service are always looking at new ways of introducing technology, leveraging technologies and looking at different ways of delivering that service."

The three-year hiring plan is a promising start, said Matt Skof, president of the Ottawa Police Association (OPA), who says the OPS is short 120 officers.

"It's unfortunate that they didn't see the need for it in 2015. However, the chief has made it clear that they're looking for the service initiative to find efficiencies prior to making any recommendations for staffing," he said. "Our position is always going to be that we're still well understaffed."

The police tax rate increase is 1.75 per cent, which equals paying an additional \$11 a year in tax for the average homeowner. With the staffing increases, that's expected to rise from 2.6 to 2.8 per cent.

There will be police budget consultations Feb. 9 to 12 in different wards.

The budget must go to city council for final approval on March 11. LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO

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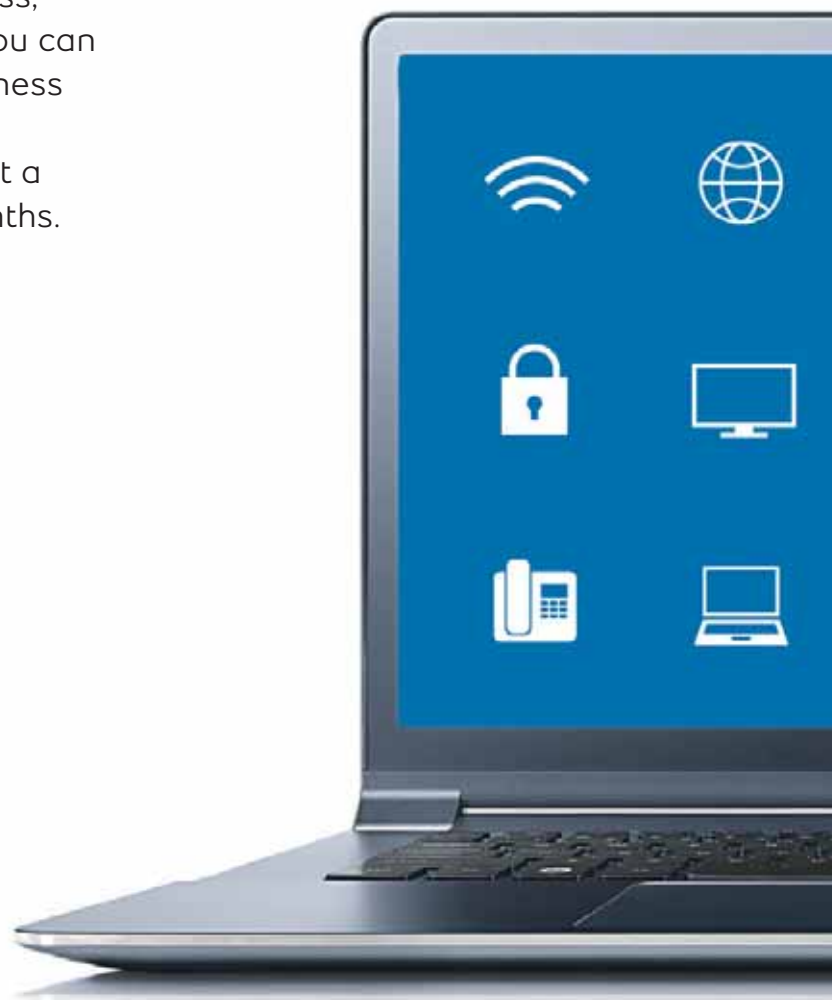
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Politics

Fedeli quits PC leadership race to back Elliott

The race for leader of Ontario's Progressive Conservatives tightened Wednesday as Vic Fedeli dropped out to support Christine Elliott.

Fedeli, the PC finance critic and former North Bay mayor, surprised supporters when he pulled out and

threw his support behind Elliott, the widow of former finance minister Jim Flaherty.

Fedeli said he hadn't sold enough PC memberships or raised enough money to win the leadership, even though he was second to Elliott in donations posted with Elections Ontario, raising \$156,000 so far compared with her \$515,000.

"I'm a numbers guy, and I'm a pragmatist," he told a

small crowd of supporters at Elliott's Toronto campaign headquarters. "I've added up the numbers, and simply put, I don't see them being there for me to win this leadership race."

Fedeli vowed to run for re-election in 2018, and said he quit now in part so he wouldn't have to pay a \$25,000 deposit each leadership candidate has to post.

"The timing (is the reason), if you want to know

the absolute specifics, Friday is the final date — pay up or get out," he said.

Elliott said she and Fedeli believe "fiscal responsibility and social compassion must go hand in hand," but rejected suggestions the race is splitting Tories along right and left lines.

"It's no longer a time for red Tory, blue Tory, social conservative (or) whatever," she said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Third-year Algonquin College student Kali Giuliani is working as one of Ottawa's first professional cuddlers. CONTRIBUTED

Looking for a warm cuddle? You're in luck

Business. The Cuddlery opens up in Ottawa

SOPHIE DESROSIERES
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Ottawa residents got their first chance to hire a professional to cuddle with on Sunday.

The Cuddlery officially launched in Ottawa at the beginning of the week, bringing the capital in step with a growing trend of professional platonic spooning and hugging businesses.

As outlandish as it might seem to some to hire a complete stranger to snuggle with, it's not so weird says one of Ottawa's newest practitioners.

"I'd always thought it was a great idea," said third-year Algonquin College student Kali Giuliani, who is working as a professional cuddler. Giuliani said she is honoured to be one of the first Ottawa cuddlers. "I'm a strong believer in touch therapy."

Cuddling services are considered a branch of touch therapy and are more science-based than some may realize, proponents say.

Human contact is known to release oxytocin in the brain, which can have a number of positive effects on physical wellbeing. Some of the benefits include lowering blood pressure, and reducing pain and inflammation.

A lack of physical contact can also cause depression and

lower self-esteem.

Marylen Reid said she had these benefits in mind when she opened up The Cuddlery. Initially launched in B.C., The Cuddlery is the first cuddling service available throughout Canada.

Ottawa's service launched with two certified cuddlers and a handful in training.

Reid realizes offering such a service can open the door to certain problems such as concerns about safety or allegations of sexually inappropriate behaviour, but she says the Cuddlery is designed with safety and comfort in mind.

Prospective cuddlers go through multiple interviews to ensure they have the required skill set, which includes the ability to be warm, welcoming and compassionate with people of all genders and races.

Different types of sessions are available ranging from basic cuddling to helping a person in crisis.

As a busy full-time student, Giuliani also appreciates the hours involved in being a professional cuddler.

"It's hard to find a job that works to your own schedule," she said. "So this is great because you set up times with clients."

Giuliani has not had a client yet, but is excited about her first one.

"I think it's going to be a really awesome opportunity that'll push me outside my comfort zone," she said.

More information is available on cuddlery.ca.

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Ontario Ottawa

Family decries parole decision

Court. Two Toronto men sentenced in 2010 shooting death of Michael Swan



JOE LOFARO
joe.lofaro@metronews.ca

Nearly five years after Barrhaven teen Michael Swan was murdered in his home, his family said the sentence handed down Wednesday to one of the men involved in the death is "an insult" to them.

Judges sentenced two Toronto men — Kyle Mullen and Dylon Barnett, both 23 — Wednesday in separate hearings for their involvement in the 2010 shooting death of Swan. They were originally charged with first-degree murder, but jurors in separate

trials convicted both men of the lesser charge of second-degree murder.

They both travelled from Toronto with a co-accused, Kristopher McLellan, to rob Swan, 19 at the time, of his drugs and money at his Moodie Drive home. Swan had been a dealer of marijuana.

A jury convicted McLellan, the group's leader, of first-degree murder in October 2013.

In the course of the home invasion, McLellan shot Swan in the upper back with a gun provided by Mullen.

The men, armed with handguns and a baseball bat, ransacked the home, absconding with \$3,400 in cash, four pounds of marijuana and some electronics.

On Wednesday, Justice Patrick Smith sentenced Mullen to life in prison with no chance of parole for 15 years.

Minutes later, Justice Douglas Rutherford sen-

tenced Barnett to life in prison with a parole ineligibility period of 12 years. The Crown had asked for a term of 18 years, while the defence asked for 10.

In a written statement to the media, Dale Swan, Michael's father, opposed Rutherford's parole decision for Barnett in light of his post-offence conduct and what he saw as an insincere courtroom apology two weeks ago.

The judge told the court that Barnett was convicted of threatening detention custodial staff while awaiting trial.

"Unlike the guilty there is no subjective, mitigating or aggravating circumstances to take into consideration for our life sentences," wrote Dale.

"Our sentences are absolute and without appeal."

A fourth man charged in the case, Sam Tsega, is awaiting trial.



History in the making

Karen Robinson, Stuart Hughes and Ottawa-born actor Andrew Moodie act out a scene from the David Hare play *Stuff Happens*, depicting a conversation between then-national security advisor Condoleezza Rice, president George W. Bush and secretary of state Colin Powell leading up to the U.S. decision to invade Iraq for a second time. Moodie says the play depicts Powell as a tragic hero who is wary of the idea of invading. Director David Ferry says the play asks important questions about the invasion and resonates with the decisions facing Canada and other nations as they grapple with foreign policy in the Middle East and threats such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The play runs at the National Arts Centre from Feb. 3 to 21. SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO

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Music. Toronto-bred singer, 19, is touring to promote his new single

Francesco. Remember that name, you'll be hearing more of it.

Francesco (pronounced Fran-chess-co) Yates, the Toronto-born 19-year-old singer, songwriter, performer was in the nation's capital on Wednesday for a media blitz that took him all over town, just five days before the release of his new single.

On only his second trip ever to Ottawa, Yates was chauffeured along the canal to downtown (the Parliament Buildings are "breathtaking," he says) for a TV performance and radio interview in the ByWard Market. Then the budding pop star headed back out on the road again with his entourage, slogging their way through the snowy streets to various radio stations.

Superstar Justin Timberlake has taken notice of Yates, tweeting that "Call," last year's single, was "the summer jam of 2014." Yates is "the young Canadian prodigy," according to *Billboard* magazine. Yates has many more big name supporters and among them is rapper Pharrell Williams, who is currently producing Yates new

album. "He's absolutely gonna be just a huge, huge, huge pop star. But not in the way people have been thinking of pop music in the last 10 years," says Williams.

Metro caught up with the basketball-loving teenager with a distinctive falsetto voice at Jump 106.9 radio studios on Merivale Rd., where Yates performed two songs (including his new single Better To Be Loved, then showcased some top-notch voice skills by sliding into some Prince and Stevie Wonder impressions as the mood hit.

Musical influences include Freddy Mercury. When asked to choose between the Beatles and Rolling Stones, he chose the Beatles, but said that was "at this very moment, but that could change at any time."

Yates began writing songs at age 11, and, at 16, was inked to a worldwide deal with Atlantic Records.

Yates' new album is expected sometime later this year. His single, *Better To Be Loved*, will be available everywhere this coming Monday.

MIKE CARROCCETTO/FOR METRO



Francesco Yates, a budding teen pop star, performed at Jump 101.9 Wednesday during an Ottawa media blitz to promote his new single, Better To Be Loved. His new album is expected to drop by the end of 2015. MIKE CARROCCETTO/FOR METRO

From megabits to creative artwork

Business. Ex-software developer-turned-‘Inventor Artist’ turns his creativity loose on the world



BACKSTAGE PASS
Jen Traplin
ottawa@metronews.ca

Six years ago, Darcy Whyte was earning a living developing software before he decided to take a step back to focus on some of his side projects.

"I didn't really, at any point, do this with the intention of turning it into a career. I didn't decide to do it, I just sort of organically started to move towards it," admits the self-proclaimed Inventor Artist.

"I started calling myself an artist about two or three years ago but I've really been engaging in this space for about six years full-time."

The first big project Whyte developed was the Squirrel — a wind-up, rubber band airplane that is popular with aviation enthusiasts, teachers and Cub Scouts all over the world.

When he decided to automate the manufacturing of the Squirrel, Whyte needed to involve robotics so, naturally, he Googled "Ottawa robotics" and found a few groups of enthusiasts that he claims are a key component to his creativity.

"Because those groups seemed to have some sort of proximity to the art commu-



Darcy Whyte transforms old vinyl records, such as this Beatles album, into beautiful clocks. CONTRIBUTOR

ity, I just sort of drifted in that direction," he says.

Now, Whyte makes all sorts of cool products — clocks and jewellery made out of old vinyl records and CDs, a DIY electric motor kit he calls the Dinky Motor, and a host of other products he says are in the “incubation, exploration, experimental stage.”

For all of his projects, Whyte still relies on his background in software development to keep things moving forward.

"Surprisingly, I don't believe there's much difference between the production of software and art — from the creative side to the problem solving and from the execution/

deployment side, I find that it's all pretty much the same," he says, adding that his projects intentionally are not patented.

He believes one of the reasons the Squirrel is so successful is because he shared it and says being part of a community of like-minded people who can all share and explore ideas is an important part of his creative process.

"Everybody talks and shares their projects. We all just help each other. When you come home from that stuff, you have way more ideas than you have time," he says.

"It's like a garden — you just see which things move forward and which don't and you put

energy into things you feel are moving in a good direction."

For more information on Darcy Whyte, visit inventorartist.com.



Darcy Whyte, shows off his popular Squirrel wind-up flying airplane toy. CONTRIBUTED



Dan VanKeeken, a vice-president at King's University, in Toronto on Tuesday. The Christian-principled school, based in Edmonton, has offered to accept former Guantanamo Bay inmate Omar Khadr as a student if he is released on bail. COLIN PERKEL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

University offers to take Omar Khadr

Education. School has built relationship with alleged terrorist over the past six years

Taking in former Guantanamo Bay inmate and government-branded terrorist Omar Khadr as a student would dovetail perfectly with how King's University sees itself, the school says.

The small Christian-principled university in Edmonton, which has developed a relationship with the prisoner over the past six years, has offered admission as part of Khadr's bail application.

"Our mission is about inspiring and educating learners to be agents of reconciliation and renewal," Dan VanKeeken, the school's vice-president, said

in an interview in Toronto this week.

Khadr, 28, pleaded guilty in 2010 before a widely maligned U.S. military commission to five war crimes he was accused of committing as a 15-year-old in Afghanistan in 2002.

He is applying for bail — to be heard in March — pending an appeal of his conviction.

"I actually haven't heard a student who is nervous or uneasy," said biology student Brenna Hansen. "For the most part, the students are actually proud to attend a university that carries out what it believes in."

King's began dealing with Khadr after students organized a justice-issues conference on his case. Some faculty put together a special curriculum he could follow from his cell.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Montana

Bill proposed that would save death-row Canadian

Montana politicians will try once again to pass legislation to get rid of the death penalty — something that would have a direct impact on death-row Canadian Ronald Smith.

Republican Rep. David Moore is proposing a bill that would abolish executions

and replace them with life imprisonment with no chance of parole. It would be made retroactive to include Smith, 57, and another death-row inmate, William Jay Gollehon.

"To me the worst punishment in the world would be to be locked in a cage the rest of my life," said Moore in an interview Wednesday.

But his decision to bring the bill forward isn't about seeking leniency for Smith, who Moore said was guilty of a "heinous act," but rather to

give the Montana taxpayer a break.

"I just look at this as the cost. That's the reason I oppose it. I don't think it's a deterrent. I think it's more of a prosecutorial tactic," he said.

Smith, originally from Red Deer, Alta., was convicted in Montana in 1983 for shooting to death two cousins near East Glacier, Mont.

He had been taking 30 to 40 hits of LSD and consuming between 12 and 18 beers a day.

He refused a plea deal that

would have seen him avoid death row. Three weeks later, he pleaded guilty. He asked for and was given a death sentence. He later had a change of heart and has been on a legal roller-coaster for decades.

An execution date has been set five times, and each time the order was overturned.

Similar legislation to abolish the death penalty has been brought forward in Montana four other times but didn't get past a judiciary committee.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Ottawa

Mounties to take over Hill security

Nearly a century of parliamentary tradition is coming to an end with the RCMP poised to take control of security inside the Parliament Buildings. The government is seeking to give the Mounties power over what used to be an independent security team patrolling the halls of the House of Commons and

Senate.

Members of that tight-knit Commons team, led by former sergeant-at-arms Kevin Vickers, stopped a gunman's rampage in the Centre Block last October. The RCMP has long had control over parliamentary grounds, but no jurisdiction inside buildings. Conservative MPs said the change shouldn't be taken as a sign of disrespect for the roughly 200 men and women who currently patrol the Commons. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Kingston, Ont. Queen's U probes claim professor teaches anti-vaccine info

Officials at Queen's University launched an investigation Wednesday into claims that a health sciences instructor has been teaching anti-vaccination materials in a first-year level course.

The allegation was raised on Twitter by a current student and a former student of the Kingston, Ont.-based university, who posted images of PowerPoint slides that were purportedly used in the class Health 102.

Melody Torcolacci, an adjunct professor, did not respond to interview requests.

Queen's principal Daniel Woolf took to Twitter to say he has asked provost Alan Harrison to investigate. Harrison said he and Woolf first heard of the claim when the Twitter conversation took off. Among questions Harrison wants answered is whether the kinesiology and health sciences department has received complaints in the past about the content of Torcolacci's lectures.

"I'm gathering information. That information gathering will include attempting to determine whether others in the university have ever had any sorts of issues raised with



Boxes of single-dose vials of the measles-mumps-rubella virus vaccine are shown in this file photo.

DAMIAN DOVARGANES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

them about similar matters. And that's all I can say at this point," Harrison said.

The online discussion began when student Michael Green tweeted: "Can we talk about how horrible it is that Melody Torcolacci still teaches that vaccines cause autism in university level classes?"

Former Queen's student Isabelle Duchaine, who is now working on a master's degree in global governance at the University of Waterloo, began to Tweet slides from a PowerPoint presentation that Torcolacci allegedly used in her class. Duchaine said she pushed the issue because of the recent surge in measles cases. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

B.C. was warned budget cuts could affect high-profile probe

Highway of Tears. Investigation would be hampered by decreased budget, top B.C. Mountie said to provincial government

The RCMP's highest-ranking member in British Columbia warned the provincial government last year that cutting the force's budget would hamper its ability to investigate missing and murdered women along the so-called Highway of Tears.

The Mounties launched their E-PANA task force in 2006 to determine whether a serial killer was operating along the Highway 16 corridor in the province's north. It was eventually assigned 18 cases involving women or girls who vanished or were found dead in the region.

The RCMP and the B.C. government confirmed last year that six officers were cut from the E-PANA investigation, which had already seen previous budget reductions.

In the spring, RCMP Deputy Commissioner Craig Callens, the commanding officer for the province, sent a memo to the province's director of police services outlining the potential impact of the cuts.

"The termination of funding for project E-PANA would impair the ability to effectively conduct historical homicide investigations within (B.C.)," Callens wrote in the June 4 memo, released through a freedom-of-information request.

Sgt. Annie Linteau of the RCMP said in a written statement that 12 officers are currently assigned to the investigation, along with support staff. At its height, the investigation



RCMP Deputy Commissioner Craig Callens attends a news conference in Vancouver on Dec. 17, 2012. Callens warned the provincial government last year that cutting the force's budget would hamper its ability to investigate missing and murdered women along the so-called Highway of Tears. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"British Columbia has been able to champion itself as a province that is committed to a serious improvement in these types of investigations. Negative press will create the erosion in public confidence and there will be the loss of best practices."

RCMP Deputy Commissioner Craig Callens, in a version of a June 4 memo marked "draft," which was absent from other versions.

had about 70 officers.

B.C. Justice Minister Suzanne Anton did not make herself available for an interview. The ministry said the RCMP was consulted about budget reductions and it's up to the force to make decisions about how to allocate resources.

A table released through another freedom-of-information request last year indicated the budget for E-PANA fell to \$1.8 million for 2012-2013, from about \$5 million in previous years. The first major break in the case happened in 2012, when investigators said they believed a dead American con-

vict was responsible for killing as many as three of the women.

Last December, the Mounties announced murder charges against a 67-year-old Ontario man in the death of 12-year-old Monica Jack, who disappeared from Merritt, B.C., in 1978.

The Highway of Tears case was examined at the public inquiry into the Robert Pickton case, known as the missing women inquiry, and commissioner Wally Oppal's final report made several recommendations to make the area safer.

The notorious highway is frequently cited by groups calling for a national inquiry into

missing and murdered aboriginal women.

In a version of Callens' memo marked "draft," he suggested the budget cuts could have consequences beyond the Highway of Tears investigation.

"There has been significant focus in the media on the investigation, both by the missing women's inquiry, United Nations groups in Canada and calls for a national inquiry on murdered and missing women," Callens wrote.

"British Columbia has been able to champion itself as a province that is committed to a serious improvement in these types of investigations. Negative press will create the erosion in public confidence and there will be the loss of best practices."

The passage is absent from other versions of the memo and it's not clear whether it made it into the final document. Neither the provincial government nor the RCMP would provide the memo as it was sent.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Hitting back. Jordan rallies support for tougher strikes

Jordan's king rushed home Wednesday, cutting short a U.S. trip, to rally public support for even tougher strikes against ISIL after the militants released a video showing a captured Jordanian pilot being burned to death in a cage.

The gruesome killing of 26-year-old Lt. Muath Al-Kaseasbeh, captured while participating in airstrikes by a U.S.-led coalition targeting the militants, sparked outrage across the Middle East and anti-ISIL protests in Jordan.

King Abdullah II, a staunch Western ally, returned home from a White House meeting with President Barack Obama during which both leaders af-

firmed their resolve to destroy the militants who have seized about one-third of Syria and Iraq.

Jordan believes the international community must intensify the campaign against ISIL, said government spokesman Mohammed al-Momani. "This evil can and should be defeated," he said.

Following the pilot's death, Jordan launched what it said would be a tough campaign against the Islamic State group. In a first response, Jordan executed Sajida al-Rishawi and Ziad al-Karbouly, two Iraqis linked to al-Qaida, government spokesman Mohammed al-Momani said. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

U.S.-Cuba relations

U.S. won't return Guantanamo

United States President Barack Obama's administration on Wednesday ruled out handing over the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, rejecting a central demand of

Cuban President Raul Castro for restoring normal relations between the two countries.

Roberta Jacobson, the top U.S. diplomat for Latin America, also said the U.S. would continue transmitting radio and television broadcasts into Cuba that are opposed by Castro's government.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Growth of Asian airlines creates safety challenge

Training. Expansion means many new recruits; another flight crashes, at least 26 die

The deadly crash of a TransAsia plane into a river in Taiwan is again focusing the world's attention on the safety challenges facing fast-growing Asian airlines.

TransAsia has been adding new routes rapidly since the Taiwanese carrier went public in 2011. TransAsia and others like it are rushing to keep up with a travel boom driven by the region's growing middle class.

The ease and increasing affordability of flying helps fuel economic growth and a better lifestyle for Asian consumers. But as airlines carry more passengers across increasingly crowded skies, they are also racing to train enough pilots.

"The demand is almost exceeding the supply," says John M. Cox, who spent 25 years flying for US Airways and is now CEO of consultancy Safety Operating Systems.

Quickly-growing airlines need to maintain standards as they hire more pilots, maintenance workers, dispatchers and flight attendants. Cox says the Asian carriers are currently meeting those marks, but it's a big challenge.

TransAsia Airways Flight 235 crashed Wednesday shortly after takeoff from Taipei, Taiwan, with 58 people aboard. Dramatic video from a car's dashboard camera captured the moment that the plane, tilting madly, clipped a bridge before landing in a shallow river. At least 26 people were killed.

It was the second fatal accident in just over six months for the airline and its seventh serious accident in the past two decades, according to aerospace publication Flightglobal. It



In this combination photo, a series of images taken from video provided by TVBS show a commercial airplane clipping an elevated roadway Wednesday just before it careens into a river in Taipei, Taiwan. TVBS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

comes barely a month after an AirAsia plane crashed into the Java Sea in a flight from Surabaya, Indonesia, to Singapore, killing all 162 aboard.

As Southeast Asia's economies grow, more people have money to travel and airlines are adding planes to whisk them across the region.

Aircraft manufactures

Airbus, ATR, Boeing, Bombardier and Embraer delivered a whopping 1,543 new planes to airlines last year. That means a total of 30 planes rolled off their collective assembly lines every week — the fastest production rate in the history of commercial aviation. Most of those aircraft went to Asia.

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Court OKs Target liquidation sale

Discounts. Prices up to 30 per cent off expected to start from Thursday

Shoppers can expect their local Target Canada stores to begin knocking down prices starting Thursday, after the retailer received court approval to liquidate its stock.

The company got the go-ahead following a hearing Wednesday involving dozens of lawyers representing the retailer, landlords and suppliers. Target spokeswoman Molly Snyder said discounts will take up to 30 per cent off regular prices.

Already many Target stores have stopped carrying perishables like milk, eggs and frozen foods, Snyder said.

The company is still clearing product out of its distribution centres, she added.



Target stores are expected to start liquidating stock Thursday.

NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The court had yet to decide late Wednesday whether Target can begin the sales of its real estate assets.

The retailer and its liquidator have argued that it needs to sell the properties immediately to keep its speedy exit from the Canadian market on schedule for mid-May.

Landlords were concerned that Target's liquidation sales would tarnish the image of

their malls and take away business from other stores that are renting space.

"I think all parties are exaggerating," Ontario Superior Court Justice Geoffrey Morawetz said.

In addition to its remaining inventory, Target's shelving, fixtures and equipment will also be sold.

The U.S.-based retailer announced last month that it would close all 133 of its Canadian stores and lay off more than 17,000 staff, just two years after it began opening stores in Canada.

Some of those reductions have already happened at its Toronto headquarters, downsized to 80 people from 770, Snyder said.

The company took over old Zellers locations and began to open under the Target banner in Canada for the first time in March 2013, but failed to deliver on customer expectations.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Watchdog creating new rules for global tracking of aircraft

A top official with the International Civil Aviation Organization says it is moving quickly to create a standard that will help in the global tracking of commercial aircraft — especially when flying over water.

The head of the ICAO council says during normal operations, an aircraft will be tracked every 15 minutes when flying over oceanic or

remote areas.

Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu says that when the aircraft is in distress, it would start to broadcast its position every minute.

ICAO's member states unanimously supported the new standard at a safety conference in Montreal.

The global tracking recommendation is one of several made in the wake of the

disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 last March.

That investigation is ongoing, but Aliu says he expects the new rules to be adopted by the fall.

Aliu told a news conference that normally, safety recommendations are only implemented after an accident investigation is complete. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Alibaba founder Jack Ma is all smiles as China's biggest e-commerce company gets listed on the New York Stock Exchange in September last year — the world's largest public offering. JEWEL SAMAD/AFP

China. Alibaba takes on Amazon in drone delivery

Echoing U.S. online retailer Amazon, Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba last week tested a drone delivery service, promising to whisk ginger tea to customers within an hour despite close controls on airspace.

Alibaba's flagship consumer-to-consumer platform Taobao, estimated to hold more than 90 per cent of the Chinese market, showed off a photo of a black-and-silver drone with helicopter-like propellers carrying a white box to launch the service.

But the option is confined to just three days and a few areas of three Chinese megacities — the capital Beijing, commercial hub Shanghai and Guangzhou in the south

— and applies only to one brand of tea from one particular vendor, with a limit of 450 deliveries in total.

The drone launch comes after Alibaba last week locked horns with a powerful government regulator, which accused the company of allowing "illegal" actions on its e-commerce platforms, including Taobao. The State Administration for Industry & Commerce (SAIC) found only about a third of products sampled from Taobao were genuine.

Taobao has pledged to crack down on counterfeit goods. Alibaba founder Jack Ma met with SAIC director Zhang Mao last week, which could signal a de-escalation of the dispute. AFP

GM. Ontario sells \$1.1B stake

Ontario has sold its remaining interest in General Motors Company, gaining approximately \$1.1 billion from the sale that it says will be invested to help build a "new generation" of public infrastructure.

Both Ottawa and the On-

tario government acquired GM shares in 2009 after providing about \$10.6 billion in aid to the automaker. The provincial government says the gain on the sale of the shares exceeds the \$900-million target included in the 2014 budget. THE CANADIAN PRESS

France

Monopoly giving out real money

The French version of Monopoly is celebrating its 80th year by slipping cash into 80 boxes of the game. One box will have the full complement in real money — 20,580 euros (about \$29,500) — as well as the Monopoly money needed to actually play the game. Another 79 boxes will have smaller amounts.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Surprise benefactor

Frugal man leaves \$6M to charity

A Vermont man who held his coat together with safety pins and foraged for firewood also had a knack for picking stocks — a talent that became public after his death in June at age 92 when he bequeathed \$6 million US to his local library and hospital. The investments made by Ronald Read, a former gas station employee and janitor, "grew substantially" over the years, said his attorney.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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VOICES

TO SAVE CANCON, WE NEED TO KILL IT

This year, CTV was able to force its cable and satellite partners to replace big-ticket American commercials with Canadian substitutes during broadcasts of the Super Bowl. In 2017, this won't be allowed. Metro's Matt LaForge wonders what else the CRTC will do to please Canadian viewers and what the culture stands to gain — and lose — in the deal



MATT LAFORGE
readers@metronews.ca

American Super Bowl commercials are here to herald the end of Canadian TV as we know it. This could be just what we need.

Last week we learned that for the 2017 Super Bowl broadcast, CRTC won't allow CTV to sub its Canadian clients' ads for the prestigious American-produced spots (a practice known as simultaneous substitution). It was surprising news, but maybe it shouldn't have been.

On the broadcast file, the Conservative government, to whom the CRTC answers, has been willing to give consumers what they want, even if it means sticking it to media conglomerates (recall the promise to unbundle cable packages in the 2013 throne speech).

The Super Bowl-commercial ruling is to date the most resolute enactment of the government's agenda. It scratches an itch that Canadian viewers have been whining about for years, and it means CTV's parent conglomerate will miss out on a lot of advertising revenue.

Precisely why the Tories are so keen to provide Canadians with the widest entertainment menu at the best prices is a worthwhile question, evoking as it potentially does the lessons of books like *Brave New*

World and Amusing Ourselves to Death.

But we won't know the full answer without the benefit of real hindsight, and in any case the more salient question right now is the classic one: What happens next?

First, let's stipulate that the new trend isn't going to reverse itself any time soon. While a lot of sentimental lip service is paid in this country to cultural nationalism and to the abstract idea of safeguarding a place in the media marketplace for Canadian stories and songs, the on-the-ground view of the CRTC's Cancon regime is at best indifferent and at worst deeply cynical. There's a pervasive sense, at least within the demographic cohort to which I belong (youngish urbanites with lifelong media addictions and delusions of worldliness), that the Cancon game is rigged in favour of the suits and that half-baked, second-rate content is being knowingly passed off as world-class. Commonly heard in my world:

"Why would I watch that movie? It's Canadian."

"Are the Geminis the movie awards or the TV awards?"

"Who is this on the radio? Hedley? Wow. Our tax dollars at work."

"I miss Republic of Doyle. Just kidding."

So to the extent that the new policy represents the gov-



A man puts up a missing puppy and Clydesdale poster in this still from Budweiser's Super Bowl commercial. SCREENGRAB

ernment's intention to take away a subsidy that has been perennially squandered on embarrassing mediocrity, there are lots of people who are all for it.

The horse is out of the barn, and it's difficult to envision the next federal government, Conservative or otherwise, trying very hard to chase it.

But before we dance on the graves of the media makers

and hail the era of the media takers, let's admit a second set of stipulations: That cultural nationalism is not an inherently empty concept and that deregulating the country's airwaves entirely would rob us of something that, in the present fog of simultaneous substitution and Mr. D reruns, we're taking for granted. This is true even at the level of Super Bowl commercials, where for every

instance of low-stakes whimsy (e.g., Budweiser's puppy-and-Clydesdale from the 2014 broadcast), there's a more self-serious spot that overtly trades in American mythmaking (e.g., The 2013 ad in which Eminem drives around Detroit and foretells the city's inevitable Phoenix-like rise). To push out Canadian commercials, no matter how derivative or hokey, in favour of corpor-

ate America's fables about a culture that we're not a part of is to submit to a colonizer that might not even realize or care that it's colonizing.

This, of course, is what made the Cancon movement necessary in the first place.

Damned if we deregulate, damned if we don't. I don't say it lightly, but, of the two, deregulating might be the way to go — not as an end, but as a means.

The ill will toward Cancon is so ingrained and so toxic; we need a radical change to reverse it. In an unregulated media market, Canadians would be given a much-needed opportunity to rediscover what it is that the U.S. can never give us.

We would remember one particularly prescient Canadian telling us that you don't know what you've got till it's gone. In such a climate, a new and improved cultural-nationalism movement could take root and establish a system of promotion and protection that takes into account all the mistakes of the past.

If American Super Bowl ads are the first steps in the undo that leads to the redo, then let it rain Budweiser frogs.

Matt La Forge is Metro's managing editor of Canada, world and business.

Our cities need to be ready for extreme weather



STEPHANIE ORFORD
readers@metronews.ca

As extreme weather assaults Canada again, climate change is hitting close to home.

Flooding, like we've seen in Calgary and southern Manitoba, and extreme winter storms, like the one Halifax is currently experiencing, continue to affect millions of Canadians, and the weather is only going to get wilder.

Canadian cities need to act

more quickly to prevent the costly and potentially tragic fallout from the erratic weather that's inevitably coming.

We need to create a national dialogue about protecting Canada's cities from extreme weather, and deal with problems before they start.

Cleaning up after the fact is outrageously expensive. The 2013 flood in Calgary cost \$6 billion. Toronto spent more than \$106 million repairing its damaged infrastructure after the 2013 ice storm.

According to a study pub-

lished in *Nature Climate Change* last week, global warming is increasing the number of droughts across the U.S. and floods across countries in the western Pacific. It's one of many such studies showing increasing weather extremes worldwide.

A major culprit of all this chaos is rising ocean temperatures, making strong storms stronger and weak storms weaker, said a study published last Thursday in *Science* by atmospheric scientists at the University of Toronto.

While we need to tackle the root causes of climate change causing these rising temperatures, we also need to be ready for when disaster strikes.

We've taken some steps toward preparing our cities, but they're often buried in government reports or hidden behind closed doors, far from public.

Some cities have made positive initial moves.

Calgary is in the process of building a reservoir for runoff from the Elbow River

to prevent future flooding.

The City of Toronto has created an action plan for protecting the city from damaging weather, including making sure drainage systems are widened and trees are pruned to reduce power line damage.

But these actions seem like small potatoes.

Will they prevent Canadian cities from grinding to a halt in a power outage, or thousands of people from losing their homes to a flood?

If we want our cities to withstand climate change, those who understand what we need to upgrade and how we can take action (engineers! urban planners!) should take leadership, speak out and help inform policymakers and the public.

If we want to protect our cities from climate change, everyone needs to be a part of the conversation.

Stephanie Orford is a writer based in Vancouver.



SCENE 2

Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON
THE WORLD OF
CELEBRITIES

Conrad Hilton GETTY IMAGES

Sorry Conrad Hilton, fighting 'peasants' is so passé

Well, this is completely charming.

Conrad Hilton, younger brother of Paris and namesake of his hotel magnate grandfather, appeared in court this week to face charges he assaulted and intimidated several flight attendants on a trip from London to L.A. last summer.

According to an FBI affidavit, Hilton punched a bulkhead, nearly hitting a flight attendant, appeared

delusional and erratic and had to be restrained for landing.

He also dropped the F-bomb some 25 times, and here are probably the best two of those times: "If you want to square up to me, bro, then bring it and I will f—ing fight you" and — my favourite — "I will f—ing own anyone on this flight. They are f—ing peasants."

Ah, the noble class.

Hilton also threatened

to get the entire crew fired because "I know your boss!"

And worst of all, he delayed drink service on the flight by 40 minutes.

That is just not cool, bro.

Hilton was released on a \$100,000 bond and will be back for arraignment next month.

His charges could land him in prison for as much as 20 years.

Tatum unleashes Magic Mike XXL trailer: You're welcome

Ladies of Tampa, this might be a good reason to take a personal day. The first trailer for Magic Mike XXL, this summer's sequel to the hit Channing Tatum stripper-fest, is out. Sure, there's no Matthew McConaughey in this one, but is that such a problem? So, how does it look? Let's just say Tatum clearly spent more time in the gym before this than he did Jupiter Ascending. The poor guy can't even get any welding done without slipping into a hip-thrusting dance routine. As the trailer boldly states, you're welcome.



The Magic Mike XXL movie poster. CONTRIBUTED

The Wachowskis aren't phased by your trolling

Andy and Lana Wachowski have heard what you've said about Cloud Atlas, Speed Racer and the Matrix sequels — and what you're already saying about Jupiter Ascending — and you know what? They don't care.

"I've gotten a thicker skin when it comes to Internet searches on our art," Andy said in an interview that refers to talk of their new science-fiction film a "torrent of pessimism."

Yikes. Oh, and they're also not too worried about box-office receipts.

"The cultural obsession with equating a mov-

ie's success to its box office is incredibly damning to this industry," Andy insists.

"It's pushing the industry more and more to making pure product, which is another reason why you constantly have reboots. It's McDonald's. People know what they're going to sit down and watch. Inherently, it's unhealthy for your brain."

Andy and Lana Wachowski GETTY IMAGES



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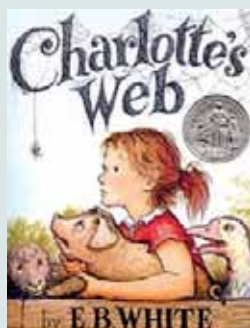


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Digital publishing



E.B. White classics to be released as ebooks in March

Three E.B. White classics read by millions of parents to their children will soon be available on the digital screen. HarperCollins said Wednesday that Charlotte's Web, Stuart Little and The Trumpet of the Swan can be purchased as ebooks starting March 17. White's granddaughter Martha White said family members had worried electronic sales would hurt business for their preferred format, paper. "After discussing this with our agent ... it's become apparent to us that ebooks complement sales of paper books, instead of replacing sales," White said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Film adaptation

New Harper Lee book could mean movie sequel

The movie version of To Kill a Mockingbird is the rare adaptation as beloved as its source material. So when Harper Lee and her publisher announced that this summer they'll release the 88-year-old author's second book, Go Set a Watchman, a kind of sequel to To Kill a Mockingbird, the shockwaves were felt almost as much in Hollywood as in the book world. If Lee agrees to sell the movie rights to her new book, it will likely be one of the most eagerly sought novels for optioning to the big screen.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gregory Peck and Mary Badham in the 1962 film adaptation of To Kill a Mockingbird

CONTRIBUTED



Finding the funny in unhappily ever after

Relationships. 500 Dates author chronicles 19 years of online dating disasters — and asks why romantic advice is skewed toward women

Mark Miller has survived 19 years of online dating since his 1995 divorce, yet he still has a smile on his face.

There's much to hate about the process, the Los Angeles-based humorist said in a recent interview, but he refuses to despair as he continues his hunt for true love. One thing that does bum him out, though, is how so much dating advice seems skewed to women.

That's why he decided to share his quest for ever after in a collection of essays called 500 Dates out this week from Skyhorse Publishing in time for that ultimate date night, Valentine's Day.

Miller, 62, isn't shy about poking fun at himself. He describes a dating disaster with accoutrements he purchased entirely from a 99-cent store.



He's had sex way too soon after meeting someone, given up prematurely on relationships, stayed in relationships beyond their expiration dates and coveted his neighbour's wife.

Conversely, one of his dates showed up in her forest ranger uniform. Another admitted she was 15 years older than advertised in her dating profile, and a third made it clear that she found dating so soul-draining that he was her last-ditch attempt before she packed it in forever. It didn't work out. A conversation with Mark Miller



Author Mark Miller has written about his quest to find love online in a new book of essays called 500 Dates. ISTOCK

about finding love online:

So how many dates are you up to now?

The 500 in the title is under-

estimating it. It would probably be closer to 750 if I was going to be honest about it. During that time I've found maybe seven fairy-tale endings that

ranged from seven months to four years. I'm still looking.

How has happily ever after changed in the 21st century? You have a chapter where you write: "And they lived apart happily ever after is the new fairy tale ending."

I think that absence does make the heart grow fonder in many ways. I've spoken to a lot of people who date regularly and only see each other once a week. It's become more special, more datelike to them. There is such a thing as living together happily ever after but it doesn't happen for a lot of people, especially in this day and age.

Do men suffer from a lack of dating advice?

I think men are less prone to asking for that advice. They have more of an I-can-do-it-myself, more of a macho thing going on, whereas women are more open. If you do a search for dating books you'll find most of them are written either by women or for women. I think there was a void for men in that regard.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Short fiction. Discovering stories in everyday things

The very first short story Katherine Heiny ever published was in The New Yorker. Her first book, Single, Mellow, Carefree (out now) has Lena Dunham — among others — raving. We called Heiny up to get inside the brain of this wildly talented fiction writer.

The short stories in your book all take ordinary experiences, like a children's birthday party, and turn them into something exciting. Do you have a habit of creating stories about people you see every day in real life?

Oh, all the time. Ordinary things are really interesting to me. If I'm watching a reality show and people are fighting about who didn't get invited to a party, to me, that's fantastic. I think if you pay close attention to everyday things, they are often funny.

How does your writing process work?

When I start writing, I get the first line of the story and it always stays in the story, but it doesn't always stay as the first line.

But there's always one line that sticks with me and the rest of the story will come over a few days.



It takes me a month or more to write a short story ... I don't write chronologically; I write little scenes and then I have to put them together.

So many writers dream of being published in The New Yorker. How did that come about for you?

I wrote this story while I was in graduate school and sent it all over the place. I got 31 rejection letters. Then a friend of mine said, "What did The New Yorker say?" I told her I didn't send it there. She said, "Katherine, you're supposed to send it there first." So I mailed it off on a Thursday afternoon and they called Friday morning to accept it. I didn't even know the mail worked that fast. EMILY LAURENCE/METRO IN NEW YORK CITY

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New

Book celebrates all-season cycling

Frigid temps have the most diehard cyclists hiding out on transit and in their cars. But it doesn't have to be this way, according to Tom Babin, author of the recently published *Frostbike* (Rocky Mountain Books). The Calgary-based Babin set out to challenge the winter wariness that creeps into cyclist consciousness. He trekked to Oulu, a small city in northern Finland, where up to 30 per cent of the population ride their bikes through the winter on snow-packed paths. And he learned how the snow bike was born from the mind of an Alaskan winter mountain-bike racer and a Texas tire maker. Through his journey, Babin found the joys of pedalling through winter, and hopefully you will, too.

LIZ BROWN/METRO



The journey from shredding to scribbling

Novel. Vancouver writer Michael Christie draws from his own life in a tale of a boy and his mother

EMILY LAURENCE
Metro World News in New York

Former professional skateboarder turned award-winning writer Michael Christie has book critics everywhere fawning over his second novel, *If I Fall, If I Die* (out Jan. 20).

The protagonist is 11-year-old Will, who is fiercely close to his agoraphobic mother.

While his mom fears the outside world, Will is pulled toward it — especially when he discovers skateboarding — and the result is a heart-felt story of their relationship. The novel hits close to home, as Christie's own mother was agoraphobic.

Here, we talk to him about the four-year emotional process of getting Will's story down on paper.



Michael Christie says skateboarding and writing aren't all that different — they're both very individual and self-directed. CEDAR BOWERS

Writing requires a lot of energy, but it's a totally different type of energy than skateboarding.

I think everything (in life) prepares you for something else in some way. Skateboarding requires a sort of obsession. I think I just transferred that obsession from

skateboarding to writing. It's all very self-directed, too. In skateboarding, there's no coach. There's no field. It's just you. You have to decide what to do and what you're capable of. Writing is the same way.

How much of the book is fic-



tion, and how much is from your life?

A lot of the stuff in the book is different, but the emotional core of the book, which is this relationship between a mother and son that is maybe a little too close but is also kind of wonderful, that's very much the biggest relationship in my life, other than with my wife.

Did anything unexpected happen while you were writing it?

Yeah, I think if nothing

unexpected happens while writing, then maybe you're in trouble. I didn't think you could write about skateboarding in a literary novel and connect with it. There's no movie, book or art about skateboarding that's actually good, so I was very wary of putting skateboarding in the book. But as I was doing it, I was like, is Will going to take up skateboarding? Is he going to do it? I think he is. I think I found a way to do it ... It was a scary book for me to write in many ways. I took a lot of emotional risks while doing it.

This isn't a traditional coming-of-age story, but it is still about coming of age. What do you think it means to grow up?

I think for everyone, there is a dramatic progression where you grow up in relative safety and we venture out, we get hurt, but we learn and grow that way. Growing up, there's a lot of facing fear, getting anxious and surviving things. That's what I wanted to capture.

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From farm to beauty cabinet

Style. A natural skincare expert explains why going organic is easier (and more effective) than you might think

TINA CHADHA
Metro New York

Don't kill us. You're about to rethink your favourite beauty products.

"A lot the ingredients (in cosmetics) are used in the car industry. Chemical emulsifiers, battery acids — and the sad part is, these ingredients aren't there to make you beautiful, but to make the product work," says natural skincare expert, Tata Harper.

"They are super-cheap industrial chemicals. But they make the formula feel amazing and last 12 years on the shelf without going bad."

The former industrial engineer spent five years working with biologist and chemists to perfect her high-performing, synthetic-free formulas. She now produces everything for her eponymous skincare line — from the botanical ingredients to packaging material — from her 1,200-acre certified organic farm in Vermont. We chatted with Harper about advances in natural beauty and when we should start slathering on anti-aging products.

For people who want to switch to natural products, where should they start?

Whether you're using natural or any other product, I always say start with things like cleansers, toners or masks. These are



Wouldn't it be good to know that your glow has come naturally? ISTOCK

Make-it-yourself mask

"I love this mask. I've been doing it since I was a little kid," says Harper. "It's amazing for glow and clarity for the skin."

- "Mix together a half a cup of plain yogurt, it doesn't matter if it's Greek, strawberries, they have a high content of salicylic acids, so it helps with cellular turnover. Add in pineapple or papaya because they both have naturally occurring enzymes that help get rid of the buildup and clean the pores. Add two tablespoons of honey — especially raw honey. Blend it all together kind of like a really thick smoothie and apply. You can put it on your face, body, back. It basically helps bring immediate glow, moisturization and radiance."



not a big financial commitment and will give you an idea on if you're going to like the products overall.

What natural ingredients are you loving?

The most impressive are the

new neuropeptides. They basically give you the effects of Botox.

You feel complete relaxation of your muscle, obviously not of your full muscle, which is great because that way you don't lose expression

in your face. But you get a relaxation of the wrinkle.

What are some advances in natural skincare right now?

Now you can find a lot of natural stem cells, which help regenerate the skin. Also, there's a lot of plumping ingredients. They're kind of like fillers but applied topically. And what happens is they go to your hypodermis, like your fat cells, and basically make your fat cells fatter and pump up the volume from within.

What's the most important part of a beauty regime?

There's nothing more important than serums or eye creams. Those two things are your real workhorses for the skin to drive collagen and anti-aging benefits. But the reality is if you don't clean your skin well and you don't exfoliate, 70 per cent of those serums are never going penetrate. A good cleansing, exfoliation is vital.

I need me some natural



Rahua shampoo, \$32

RMS eye polish in Solar \$28



Mason Pearson brush, \$120

Tata Harper Elixir Vitae, \$365



Canadian street style

Name: Sheila

Age: 30

Occupation: Fashion stylist

What she's wearing

Forever 21 shoes, Oak & Fort T-shirt, Ann Taylor Cardigan, vintage coat, Ray Ban sunglasses, MinkPink scarf, Claire Vivier Bag.

Her inspiration

"I am inspired by menswear."

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Botanicals are in bloom

Great flowers start with pollination, and for that you need bees. Luxury label Burberry started off the revival, creating the buzz with its SS15 Ready to Wear collection which paid tribute to the insects and flowers of Britain. Coincidentally, at Paris Haute Couture week, flowers and florals were in fashion.

This past week, we learned that Chanel Director Karl Lagerfeld isn't the only designer with green fingers. Chanel's Spring flowering fashion featured gentle, curved silhouettes embellished with floral garlands, lush petals and beaded pis-

tils. A colour palette of pinks, oranges, reds, electric blue, pollen yellow and sap green brought extra cheer to this upbeat collection.

There was no stopping Dutch design tandem Viktor&Rolf who pushed the flower trend to the limits. Bold 3D floral appliqué, graphic petal prints and abundant bouquet-esque babydoll dresses drew inspiration from flower-loving artist Van Gogh.

At the Alexis Mabille show, models wore sexy tattoo-inspired dresses with strategically placed creeping flower motifs that intertwined over the body. AFP



One of the latest specimens from Christian Dior's haute couture Spring garden. FRANCOIS GUILLOT / AFP

Best of show: 4 decor trends for spring

I recently returned from New York City where I attended the NYNOW Home & Lifestyle Show to view the latest decor products. I narrowed down the top four trends I kept seeing. Watch for these stylish looks coming to home decor stores this spring



DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Tactile texture

Nubby silks, fur, chunky knits and braided items will add tactile texture to everything from rugs to pillows. Look for them in neutral colours that allow texture to be the star.



A super-thick wooden needle means you can make your own rug in less than an afternoon! **DIY Crochet Aspen 32" Rug Kit**, \$235, [Loopy-Mango.com](#)

Add life to that boring neutral sofa. **Divisional Orange 20" pillow**, \$50, [CB2.com](#)



Who says the hottest trends have to break the bank? **Constance Orange Accent Chair**, \$599, [UrbanBarn.com](#)

Pops of orange

Colour kept popping up and the one that stood out the most was orange. Teamed with a sandy-beige tone to relax the jolt of citrus, orange feels juicy and spring-like.

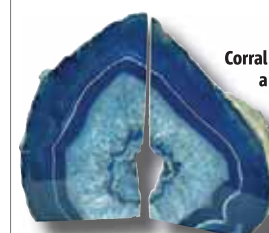
Metallic copper

Although there were a lot of gold accents throughout the show, copper tones were trying hard to shine. Team copper with cream for summer and add it to black for a sexy look this fall.



Line them up or bunch them up to fit any space. **Pascal Bunching Table**, \$269, [CrateAndBarrel.com](#)

Even the simplest shape deserves a little copper-tone glam. **Porcelain & Copper Dipped Vase**, \$35, [Chapters.Indigo.ca](#)



Corral your books with a stylish trend. **Blue Natural Agate Bookends**, \$138, [Amazon.ca](#)

Agate crystal

Slices of shiny stone, sparkling in blue, purple and green will be seen on items as tiny as napkins rings and as large as lamps.

Bonus trend

Christmas 2015 is going to be 'Retro 1965' so get digging in your parents' basement and check out spring yard sales this year.

- Think old pink, turquoise, silver, tinsel, light reflectors and bubble lights.

Think inside the box: Adaptable home in a cube

Architecture. Toronto-based developer touts customizable cube as the future of housing

How would you feel about replacing your house with a personalized cube?

Cubitat, a 10-metre-cubed prefabricated structure, offers just that. The concept, the result of a collaboration between Toronto-based Urban Capital and Nichetto Studios, is being billed as "the future of progressive housing" after going on show at the Interior Design Show 2015.

Inspired by both the prefab world and modern production methods, the custom-assembled architectural solution has been designed to be a "transferable home." It comprises a central frame which forms

Cubitat's core elements

The cube contains the core elements of a standard home, including a kitchen, bedroom, bathroom and lounge, all in one trans-portable cube.

- Customers can add furniture items and fittings to tailor each model to their own tastes.

four walls containing pull-down furniture for each of the spaces.

"Cubitat is architecture on a whole new level, as product," says Urban Capital co-founder Mark Reeve. "We're rethinking the built world with the most adaptable home imagined."

So will the concept become a commercial reality? Watch this (cubed) space. **AFF**



Cubitat URBAN CAPITAL

Rethinking living space

"We're rethinking the built world with the most adaptable home imagined." Urban Capital co-founder Mark Reeve

Cookbook of the Week

Cross-country to
your kitchen table



In his show, *You Gotta Eat Here!*, John Catucci travels across Canada on a journey to find the country's best comfort foods.

Now he teams up with Michael Vlessides for a follow-up to their first book, *You Gotta Eat Here Too!* Features mouth-watering recipes from restaurants across Canada that you may have never heard of — and the colourful characters behind the establishments.

Among the recipes are Codfish Cakes from Chafe's Landing in St. John's, Jerk Chicken from The SmoQue Shack in Ottawa and Hot Chick Panino from Holy Grill in Calgary. **METRO**

For your phone

Mixed Cocktails
(iPad/iPhone/
Android; Free/
Registration)



MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
@RealKrisAbel
scene@metronews.ca

There are more than 400 recipes in this Bacardi cocktail guide which includes gorgeous photography, unlockable badges, and a master class of mixologist techniques. Registration is needed for full access.



There's comfort food, then there's this

Lunch or dinner.

Indian Tacos replace the traditional soft or hard shell with unique doughy 'frybread'

"In this dish, frybread is topped with ground prime rib that's been cooked in a savoury stew with tomatoes, red kidney beans, and (chef) Brad's not-so-secret taco seasoning," write John Catucci and Michael Vlessides in *You Gotta Eat Here Too!* of the Indian Tacos that can be found at Burger Barn in Ohsweken, Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve, Ont.

"The top of the tower is shredded cheddar and mozzarella, followed by lettuce, diced

Ingredients

Taco Seasoning

- 3 tbsp cornstarch
- 2 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp sweet paprika
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 1/4 tsp chicken soup base
- 1 1/2 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 3/4 tsp garlic powder
- 3/4 tsp cayenne pepper

Taco Meat

- 2 lbs ground prime rib beef
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 can (14 oz) red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (19 oz) stewed tomatoes, with juice

Frybread

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- Canola oil

Taco Seasoning

1. In a bowl, combine all of the ingredients. Set aside.

Taco Meat

1. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, brown the ground beef with the butter. Drain any excess liquid. Add the kidney beans, stewed to-

matoes, and 3 tablespoons of the prepared taco seasoning and stir to combine. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 45 minutes to allow flavours to meld.

Frybread

1. While the meat is cooking, in a medium bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir in the buttermilk until the dough just comes together, adding more flour if dough is too sticky to handle.

2. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead until smooth (do not over-knead — less is more).

3. In a large, deep, heavy skillet over medium-high heat, heat 3/4 inch of oil.

4. Using your hands, tear dough into 8 to 10 equal-sized pieces, each about 3/4 cup (the size of a baseball). Shape into round discs about 1/4 inch thick, making a thinner depressed area in

the centre of each.

5. Fry breads in hot oil until golden on both sides, turning only once. Drain on paper towel.

Assembly

1. Scoop taco meat onto frybread and top with shredded cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, red onion, sour cream. **RECIPES FROM YOU GOTTA EAT HERE TOO! LONE EAGLE ENTERTAINMENT LTD. PUBLISHER BY COLLINS CANADA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.**



This recipe serves four. FROM YOU GOTTA EAT HERE TOO!

Korean Beef Noodles for your Buddha belly



This recipe serves two. FROM YOU GOTTA EAT HERE TOO!

This recipe, featured in *You Gotta Eat Here Too!*, comes from *The Smokin' Buddha* in Port Colborne, Ont. Write John Catucci and Michael Vlessides: "The Buddha's Korean

Beef Noodles features a heaping mound of noodles tossed with slices of marinated sirloin, portobello mushrooms, and homemade bulgogi sauce."

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 cup sesame oil
- 1 tsp brown sugar
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- One 1-inch piece fresh ginger, chopped
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1/2 lb sirloin beef, sliced
- 1 large portobello mushroom, sliced
- 1 pkg (14 ounces) udon noodles
- 1/2 carrot, grated
- 2 tbsp green onion, chopped

1. In a small bowl, whisk together the soy sauce, sesame oil, brown sugar, garlic, and ginger.

2. Set aside. In a wok over medium heat, heat the oil. Stir-fry the beef and mushrooms until browned. Add the noodles and prepared sauce and cook, stirring constantly, until the noodles are softened. Add the carrots and simmer for about 1 minute.

3. Divide the noodles among serving bowls and garnish with the green onions.

Court

Hernandez, slain man weren't close: Girlfriend

Former New England Patriots star Aaron Hernandez often smoked marijuana with the man he's accused of later killing, and they hung out during family gatherings, the victim's girlfriend testified Wednesday. But she insisted that they had only the beginnings of a friendship and were not very close, contrary to what Hernandez's lawyers have said.

Shaneah Jenkins, the girlfriend of victim Odin Lloyd and the sister of Hernandez's fiancée, testified for a third day about Lloyd's relationship with Hernandez. Lloyd was found dead in June 2013, shot at an industrial park near Hernandez's home in North Attleborough.

Hernandez's lawyers have said Hernandez had no reason to kill Lloyd and the two were friends.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Golf

McIlroy settles dispute with former agents

Rory McIlroy reached a settlement with his former management company on Wednesday, cutting a multimillion-dollar deal to end their contract dispute and avoid a lengthy court case exposing the financial dealings of the world's top-ranked golfer.

Terms were not officially disclosed, but British media said McIlroy agreed to pay more than 13 million pounds (\$24.8 million).

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baseball

Delgado tops Canadian hall of fame's 2015 class

The Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame's Class of 2015 will include former Toronto Blue Jays sluggers Carlos Delgado, Corey Koskie and Matt Stairs.

Longtime Montreal Expos manager Felipe Alou will also be inducted June 13, along with sportswriter Bob Elliott.

Delgado had eight consecutive 30-home-run campaigns with the Blue Jays. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Boston toasts its Super Bowl champions

New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski chugs a beer, tossed to him by a fan, during a parade celebrating the team's fourth NFL title parade in Boston, Wednesday. The crowd roared as a smiling Bill Belichick and his players snapped selfies and took turns waving the Lombardi trophy earned in a hard-fought 28-24 Super Bowl victory over the defending champion Seattle Seahawks on Sunday. CHARLES KRUPA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ryan embracing role with Senators



THE HOCKEY NEWS
Murray Pam
ottawa@metronews.ca

When potential unrestricted free agent Bobby Ryan inked his seven-year, \$50.75-million contract extension with the Ottawa Senators in October, fans were pleasantly surprised. Born in Cherry Hill, N.J., a 20-minute jaunt from Philadelphia, many thought Ryan would jump at a prime opportunity to return home.

Fortunately, a change of scenery was never really considered. Ryan and his fiancée Danielle embraced the city, and his Senators teammates and supporters are better for it.

A four-time 30-goal man, Ryan was the third wheel with the Ducks — unable to shake out of the shadows of Ryan Getzlaf and Corey Perry. Ryan was also maligned publicly by former Anaheim general manager Brian Burke during the Olympic selection process for having all the talent in the world, but not exuding intensity — an opinion formed by



Bobby Ryan is endearing himself to Ottawa fans on and off the ice.
BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

the GM during his tenure.

Since his trade to the Senators July 5, 2013, Ryan has certainly dispelled this tag. For almost four months last season, the 27-year-old played through a sports hernia injury before succumbing to surgery when the club fell out of the playoff race.

This campaign Ryan also proved doubters wrong, missing only two games despite breaking a finger. The six-foot-two, 207-pounder regularly had his finger frozen prior to playing.

Ryan has become a leader

on and off the ice for the Senators and is often the first player available for post-game interviews.

Off it, the eight-year veteran is not one to mince words. After a 5-4 loss to Dallas last week in which the club trailed 3-0 at one point, Ryan opined, "It's another moral victory, but it's a little too late for that. We're point-watching in January."

With 226,000 followers, @b_ryan9 is not one to shy away from Twitter conversation. In one discussion, Ryan explained his disdain for

analytic stats by referring to now-engrained Corsi event numbers as "Corsica."

The 2005 second overall pick also entrenched himself with the local community, purchasing a suite for Bobby's All-Star Kids.

A first-time all-star himself, Ryan has notched 16 points in his past 15 games and is on pace for a career high in assists. Ryan's unselfish play is a key reason Mike Hoffman and Mika Zibanejad have thrived. Hoffman is the Senators leader in goals with 17, while Zibanejad is three markers away from tying his season-high of 16.

Coach Dave Cameron praised Ryan Saturday, calling him arguably the team's best player, at least the Senators' top forward. Of Corsi is.

Ryan's Corsi stats

	Corsi events	Corsi-for %
All situations	1,584	56.69
Even strength	1,290	50.31

STATS COURTESY OF
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UFC doping scandal not a one-off

MMA. The positive tests of Silva and Diaz expose a much larger issue for Dana White

The UFC is reeling from its latest doping scandal, but is it any surprise?

Looking for an edge, however slim, when you're stepping into a cage to fight seems inevitable. The gruelling training in advance of a mixed martial arts bout also takes a toll, prompting some to take shortcuts. And given fighters get paid only for competing, there is incentive to roll the dice and do what's needed to make it to fight night.

Still the latest doping scandal is a body blow to the MMA juggernaut given the star quality of the offender.

The UFC revealed Tuesday night that former middleweight champion Anderson Silva, one of the sport's icons, had tested positive for steroids on a Jan. 9 out-of-competition drug test. Adding to the scandal, Nick Diaz, the man Silva beat in the main event of UFC 183 last Saturday, had tested positive for elevated marijuana levels for a third time.



After Saturday's UFC 183 main event at MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, the UFC revealed that Nick Diaz, left, tested positive for elevated marijuana levels and Anderson Silva, right, tested positive for steroids. STEVE MARCUS/GETTY IMAGES

The news comes on the heels of a positive cocaine test prior to UFC 182 for light-heavyweight champion Jon 'Bones' Jones, who succeeded Silva as the sport's pound-for-pound best fighter.

"Does anyone in the UFC actually follow the rules?" former

Olympic and world wrestling champion Jordan Burroughs tweeted.

The rules are enforced by bodies like the Nevada State Athletic Commission, which tests boxers and MMA fighters alike in regulating their sports.

So-called social drugs are

not considered performance-enhancing. But they are subject to sanction if detected on fight night, given the concern that fighters could suffer unnecessary damage if dulled or anesthetized by such drugs.

While Silva and Diaz have yet to tell their side of the story

and confirmation of the tests is still pending, a thin doping line runs through the sport. Other organizations are not exempt from cheating but the spotlight shines on the UFC as the sport's major player.

Welterweight Thiago Alves, German bantamweight Dennis

Siver, Ashlee Evans-Smith ... The list goes on, with a nine-month ban and fine the usual punishment for a first offence.

With 45 shows planned for 2015, the UFC conveyor belt never stops. The organization currently has 575 fighters under contract. Most need to fight to pay the bills.

Brazilian light-heavyweight Thiago Silva admitted to doping and tampering with his urine at a UFC 125 drug test in January 2011.

"I reinjured my back 45 days before the (UFC 125) fight with Brandon Vera. After not fighting for a year, I made the decision to not pull out of the fight."

UFC president Dana White said prior to UFC 182 that his organization, rather than launch its own full-time drug-testing program, would probably give athletic commissions more money for them to conduct testing.

Asked what the UFC will do in the future in commission-free zones, he directed the questions to Marc Ratner, the UFC's vice-president of regulatory affairs. Ratner did not offer an immediate answer.

Given the sport's makeup, there may not be one.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

FA Cup: Coutinho saves Liverpool at the 11th hour



Philippe Coutinho, second from left, scored a stoppage time goal and saved the Reds from exiting the FA Cup against Bolton. PETER BYRNE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Philippe Coutinho struck a stoppage-time winner for Liverpool, as the Reds beat Bolton 2-1 in the FA Cup fourth round replay on Wednesday.

Last season's Premier League runners-up were on the verge of exiting the competition after Eidur Gudjohnsen converted a second-half penalty in the 59th minute.

However, Raheem Sterling struck in the 86th and, within minutes, the Brazilian settled the match with a strike from outside the box, in the week that saw him pen a new long-

term deal with the Anfield club.

"It was always going to be a tough game," said Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers.

"Going 1-0 behind away from home put us on the back foot. You have to keep your patience and keep the width in the game, especially against 10 men."

The visitors dominated in a first half which saw Sterling strike the outside of the post shortly before the interval.

Yet it was the hosts that took the lead, courtesy of Gudjohnsen's spot kick after Martin Skrtel was penalized

for a challenge on youngster Zach Clough.

Bolton were reduced to 10 men minutes later when Neil Danns was shown a second yellow for a late challenge on Joe Allen in the 66th.

Following Danns' dismissal, Rodgers moved Emre Can forward from centre back into a central midfield role. That moved paid dividends. The German youngster picked out Sterling with a lofted pass that the England international netted on the volley.

With extra time looming, Coutinho curled a right-footed

Legend

700

Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard played his 700th match for the Reds against Bolton on Wednesday.

shot beyond goalkeeper Andy Lonergan to see off a spirited performance from Neil Lennon's side.

Liverpool will now face Crystal Palace in the fifth round at Selhurst Park.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

Predators get Rinne back

Predators goaltender Pekka Rinne has been cleared to return from a knee injury that kept him out the past three weeks, missing eight games.

He will start Thursday night against the Anaheim Ducks.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Lynch won't be fined, league says

Seattle Seahawks' Marshawn Lynch fulfilled all his media obligations on Super Bowl week and will not be fined, said the NFL.

Lynch never appeared for more than five minutes, saying, "I'm just here so I won't get fined."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

African Cup

Gervinho, Touré power Ivory Coast over Congo to final

Ivory Coast powered into the African Cup of Nations final with a dominant 3-1 win over Congo on Wednesday, giving the star-studded title favourite a chance at ending 25 years of agony at the continental

championship.

Big-name players Yaya Touré and Gervinho delivered standout performances at Bata Stadium in the first semifinal, scoring a goal each to help send the Ivorians to their third final in the last six African Cups. Ivory Coast lost its last two finals in penalty shootouts.

"OK, we are in the final, this is the most important thing," coach Herve Renard said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Ivorian captain Yaya Touré, right, hammered a half-volley into the net in the first half. THEMBA HADEBE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across?
Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.



Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

Aries

March 21 - April 20

Don't be in so much of a hurry that you bite off more than you can chew today. If you have to ask for help it won't look too impressive, will it?

Taurus

April 21 - May 21

You must tell the truth today, even if it hurts the feelings of people you love. It will hurt them more if they discover they were the only ones who did not know what was going on.

Gemini

May 22 - June 21

You need to make an important decision today and you need some peace and quiet so you can think and, hopefully, come to the correct conclusion.

Cancer

June 22 - July 23

You can't be expected to make an unbiased decision about something where your own interests are at stake. Either do what is best for yourself or ask a neutral third party for advice.

Leo

July 24 - Aug. 23

It may be true that you have gone over the top and offended someone important but so what? If you go through life watching your every word you won't get much said.

Virgo

Aug. 24 - Sept. 23

You seem to believe that everyone is as honest as you. What happens today will open your eyes, in a big way, to the fact that that isn't the case.

Libra

Sept. 24 - Oct. 23

You are on the verge of giving up on something that you can't seem to crack. What you don't realize is that you are closer to a breakthrough than you have ever been before. Hold on.

Scorpio

Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

It may annoy you that some people are so slow on the uptake but not everyone can be a big-brained Scorpio like you. Make allowances today.

Sagittarius

Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

If someone says you need to be cautious, act on their advice. It may not be your natural way but a few days from now you can make up for it by going to the other extreme.

Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

Someone will make you a tempting offer today but if you are smart you'll demand more. According to the planets they want you on board so much they can probably be persuaded to up their offer substantially.

Aquarius

Jan. 21 - Feb. 19

The danger today is that you could say something on the spur of the moment and get yourself in a whole load of trouble with authority figures.

Pisces

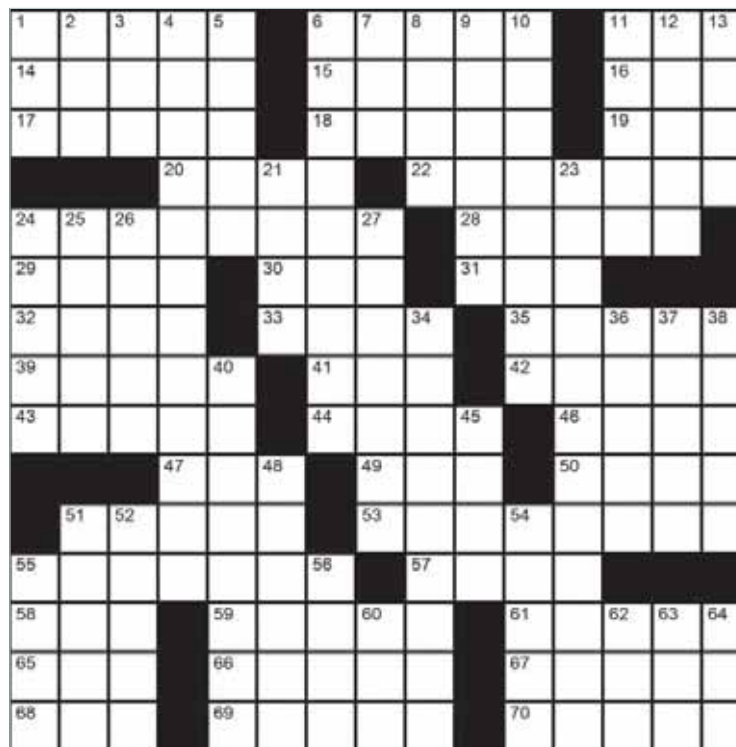
Feb. 20 - March 20

You owe someone a favour and you'll be expected to repay it in the next 24 hours. They went out of their way. Do the same.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan

Across

1. Score-makers in hockey
6. The Divine ___ (Bette Midler)
11. Appropriate
14. Rankin __, Nunavut
15. Prefix with 'arthritis'
16. Sonny & Cher
17. Everglades eeker!
18. On-the-road reversal
19. "All We ___" by Kim Mitchell
20. Chess piece
22. Marked 'Received'
24. Architectural barriers
28. Having wings
29. ___-friendly
30. Kind of power
31. Knight's title
32. Vesper __, "Casino Royale" (2006) character
33. Unfreeze
35. Move along rapidly
39. Slang-style friends
41. Religious song: "Lead __, _ King Eternal"
42. Mystery writer Dame Christie, informally
43. Boat's back
44. Donnybrook
46. Particles
47. '___' for Inuvik
49. "Cold Mountain" (2003) role
50. Roughly: 2 wds.



51. "Buffalo Stance" singer Ms. Cherry
53. Actress Amanda
55. 1988 Tracy Chapman hit: 2 wds.
57. Want
58. Fleur-de-___
59. Maynard G. ___ (Beatnik on "The Many Loves of Dobie

- Gillis")
61. Ambiguous
65. Ms. Longoria
66. Arctic boat
67. Matrikin
68. Actress Susan
69. "Grease" (1978) role
70. 'Mr.' or 'Mrs.' on "Three's Company"

Down

1. Showbiz job
2. 1996 Barenaked Ladies album: 'Born ___ Pirate Ship'
3. ___-Rock (Music genre)
4. Edith Prickley's signature outfit, ___ jacket and hat
5. Guitar attachment
6. Peak in Auyuittuq National Park in Nunavut that's named after a Norse god: 2 wds.
7. 'Special' suffix
8. Mr. Townsend, et al.
9. Some mattresses

10. World's most famous painting: 2 wds.
11. Modify
12. Mush, recipes-style
13. Steel-___ boots
21. Left
23. Calgary Flames captain: 2 wds.
24. Parts of fruits
25. Heretofore: 2 wds.
26. 1960s song: "Walk Away ___"
27. Ms. Twain's
34. 'Let's Be Ready' is a current album by what Toronto band, with The?: 2 wds.
36. Q. "What's the composer Mr. Stravinsky's first name?" A. "___, _ believe."
37. Temporary hair colouring product
38. Do over the lawn
40. CBC's "Mr. D" actress Naomi
45. Mr. Diggs
48. Suraj __, "Life of Pi" (2012) star
51. Easily duped
52. Journalism piece
54. Flu symptom
55. Escaped
56. Rider's 'rope'
60. "Not ___!" (Pretty good!)
62. Opening
63. Vehicle variety, Sport-___
64. Poet's 'always

Yesterday's Crossword



Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers



Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Yesterday's Sudoku



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